

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-12 are pending in this application. Claims 1 and 2 are amended by the present response and claims 9-12 are added by the present response. No new matter is added.¹ Claims 1-8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over WO 01/774122 to Tojo et al. (herein "Tojo")² in view of U.S. patent 4,790,859 to Marumo et al. and JP 2000-160390 to Fumio et al. (herein "Fumio"). That rejection is traversed by the present response as discussed next.

Each of independent claims 1 and 2 is amended by the present response to clarify that in the box-shaped body the three compartments have a structure such that "said second compartment and said third compartment are respectively provided directly adjacent to said first compartment". That subject matter is shown for example in Figures 1-3 in the present specification.

The claimed features are believed to clearly distinguish over the applied art.

First, applicants respectfully submit none of the applied art to Tojo, Marumo, nor Fumio disclose or suggest the features newly recited in the claims that "said second compartment and said third compartment are respectively provided directly adjacent to said first compartment". With respect to the feature of dividing a box-shaped body into three separate compartments the outstanding Office Action states:

... JP'390 teaches separating the control system and the electroplating cell in separate rooms and the oxygen and hydrogen gases are also discharged in the separate rooms to avoid potential hazardous or unsafe conditions due to cross contamination (paragraph [0045, 0057]). In addition, JP'390 does not require that the separate rooms for housing the control

¹ Applicants respectfully submit the amendments to claims 1 and 2 and new claims 9-12 are fully supported by the original specification, for example in Figures 1-3 and see also the specification at page 9, lines 1-4 and page 9, line 9 et seq.

² In addressing the teachings in WO 01/77412 the Office Action relied on U.S. Patent 6,818,105 B2, which is an English language version of WO 01/77412. The presently submitted remarks also rely on that U.S. patent 6,818,105 B2.

system and the electroplating cell to be located away from each other. Therefore, the Examiner considers two rooms located right next to each other with a shared wall within the scope of JP'390's invention.³

In reply to that grounds for rejection, applicants note Fumio (JP'390) merely discloses placing an electrochemical plating device and a control system in two separate rooms to avoid contamination of the electrochemical plating device when the control system undergoes maintenance work. Even assuming that such a feature in Fumio is similar to the claimed first, second, and third compartments, which applicants dispute as discussed further below, clearly that disclosure in Fumio of utilizing two separate rooms does not correspond to the claimed features that "said second compartment and said third compartment are respectively provided directly adjacent to said first compartment". In fact, no disclosure in any of Tojo, Marumo, nor Fumio is directed to such claimed features.

Moreover, applicants submit none of the cited art discloses or suggests even utilizing a "box-shaped body" divided into each of *first, second, and third compartments*, by being divided by internal partition walls.

Tojo does not disclose or suggest any structure of a single box-shaped body being separated into three compartments by internal partition walls. Marumo merely discloses separating gaseous mixtures from first and second gases having different chemical compositions. Those teachings in Marumo are in fact not even related to any disclosure in Tojo or to the claimed invention. Fumio merely discloses utilizing two separate rooms such that a plating section is installed in a first room and the management department is installed in a second room. Thus, applicants submit none of Tojo, Marumo, or Fumio disclose or suggest a single box-shaped body being separated into three compartments by internal partition walls.

³ Office Action of August 21, 2007, the sentences bridging pages 2 and 3.

Moreover, even if the teachings were combined as suggested in the Office Action, at most that would have suggested to one of ordinary skill in the art modifying Tojo to house the electrolyzer in a separate room from other units, as that is what Fumio teaches. No disclosure would have even addressed utilizing *three separate compartments* with a first absorption unit in one compartment, a second absorption unit in another compartment, and an electrolyzer in still another compartment. The art at most discloses an electrolyzer in a separate room from all other units, which would thereby result in only two different rooms.

In that case, such rooms would not be formed in a single box-shaped body and separated by internal partition walls.

Moreover, none of the cited art to Tojo, Marumo, nor Fumio even address benefits realized by the claimed features.

The applicants of the present invention recognized that in a fluorine gas generator including a supply system in which raw material gas (e.g. hydrogen fluoride) is supplied and a discharge system in which generated gas (e.g. hydrogen and fluorine) are discharged, provided adjacent to each other, and in which the discharge system and the supply system are not separated by a partition wall, if the raw material gas leaks in the supply system and the generated gas leaks in the discharge system, atmospheric pressure becomes higher in the supply system and lower in the discharge system, which causes a status such that a differential pressure between the supply system and discharge system is more likely to occur. In such situations gas may move from the supply system to the discharge system, and thereby the generated gas and the supplied gas are likely to be mixed.

The claimed invention overcomes such drawbacks. In the claimed invention since the fluorine gas generator includes a supply system and a discharge system separated by a partition wall that can prevent gas from moving and mixing, and as the fluorine gas generator is divided into first, second, and third compartments, even if the discharge system and the

supply system are provided adjacent to each other, if gas leaks in one compartment, mixture of the leaked gas with gas in other compartments can be prevented. Thereby, the mixture of gases can be prevented during normal times, and in addition can be prevented during any emergency situations.

None of the cited art discloses or suggests such benefits nor the structure discussed above and as positively recited in the claims to realize such benefits.

In such ways, applicants respectfully submit each of independent claims 1 and 2, and the claims dependent therefrom, clearly distinguish over Tojo in view of Marumo and Fumio.

The present response also adds new dependent claims 9-12 for examination. New claims 9 and 11 further recite “said first compartment is centrally located between said second and third compartments”. Such a further structure is not even addressed by any of the cited art. Again the outstanding rejection merely cites Fumio to disclose placing an electrochemical plating device and a control system in two separate rooms, which clearly does not correspond to the above-noted claimed feature that “said first compartment is centrally located between said second and third compartments”.

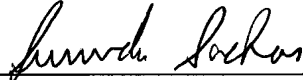
New dependent claims 10 and 12 further recite “wherein said box-shaped body is formed as a unit”. In contrast to that claimed feature, Fumio merely discloses utilizing different elements in different rooms in a building, which clearly does not correspond to a “box-shaped body [that] is formed as a unit”.

In view of these foregoing comments, applicants respectfully submit new dependent claims 9-12 even further distinguish over the applied art.

As no other issues are pending in this application, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is now in condition for allowance, and it is hereby respectfully requested that this case be passed to issue.

Respectfully submitted,

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